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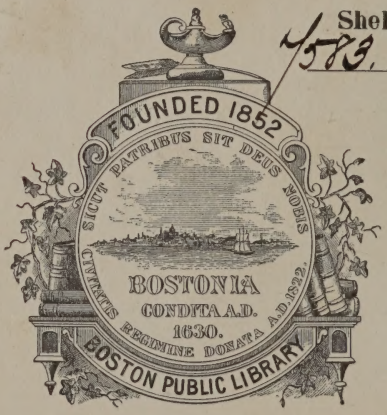

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SARGENT'S ADDRESS

BEFORE THE

WORCESTER TEMPERANCE SOCIETY.

AN

ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT

WORCESTER,

BEFORE THE

WORCESTER TEMPERANCE SOCIETY.

BY L. M. SARGENT.

Published by the Society.

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ADDRESS.

It is to me a source of sincere satisfaction, in any good work, to co-operate, in my humble way, with the citizens of Worcester; a town, whose happy location, and other obvious advantages, are likely to render it as famous, for its conventions of the wise and good, as the celebrated city of Ratisbon, for its conclaves and diets of old.

I am invited hither, by the Temperance Society of this ancient town, to unite with them in the celebration of their anniversary. There is no cause, in which all considerations of a selfish and personal nature may more easily be forgotten, than the cause of the temperance reform; and it would afford me more pleasure to sit, as I profitably might, a respectful listener to the enlightened wisdom of more than one of the many, by whom I am surrounded, than offer you my own imperfect conceptions, upon that interesting theme, which is a topic of absorbing and inexhaustible interest to man to-day and for ever; until the waters of strife, those rivers of ruin, that are flowing around us, shall be dried up at their fountain heads; and man shall no longer find it in his heart to live by the death of his brother. The Society, which I have the honor to address, with eleven hundred members upon its roll, is entitled to command the services of any individual, who has given in his adhesion in the usual form. I

have therefore obeyed the summons, from a motive of consideration for the numerous and respectable body, by whom it is issued, and from a desire to bear my humble testimony in a holy cause; and, not at all, from a presumptuous expectation of pouring new light upon a subject, which has recently gathered together so much of the wisdom and eloquence of the whole Commonwealth.

This day is the anniversary of your Society. Another milestone is planted in the path of time. As friends of temperance, we stand on elevated ground. Like the traveller upon his way, let us look back, from this eminence, upon the path we have already trod; let us contemplate the scene immediately around us; and then turn our eyes in the direction of our future way. Let us, in other words, consider the origin, present state, and future prospects of this mighty movement upon earth, which is secondary, in the rapidity of its progress, and the beneficial character of its influence upon man, to nothing but the revelation of light and life to a benighted world. It is the cause of God, and no place could be more appropriately chosen for the consideration of such a cause than these consecrated courts, his holy temple.

It has been pleasantly remarked, that nothing is more wonderful, than that we wonder at all; and nothing is more difficult for man, than to wonder by rule. It is no easy task so entirely to dispossess the mind of its present familiar consciousness, in relation to any interesting subject, as to contemplate it with the full measure of surprise, which it originally produced. We cease to wonder at that, which has been familiarly presented before us, in the form of frequent exhibition, although we may be as far removed from any satisfactory explanation of all, that excited our astonishment, as we were at the commencement. Magnetic and electrical attraction and repulsion; the familiar experiments with acids and alkalies; the conflagration of certain liquors by contact in a cold state; these, and a multitude of similar examples, notwithstanding the very best philosophical theories, invented for their solution, are just as inexplicable as they were, when these peculiar properties of matter were originally known: but

familiarity has begotten a species of philosophical contempt for such common-place causes of astonishment. The ingenuity of man is everlastingly at work; new projects are constantly presented to the world; they are shadowed forth, and, in their earliest developement, they are frequently encountered with derision and contempt; they are pronounced, not only by those who are interested to oppose them, but by grave, intelligent, and impartial individuals, to be visionary, impracticable and absurd: they are nevertheless, in many cases, accomplished, in the most ample and satisfactory manner. The well-balanced patron, who kept his opinion to himself, and remained aloof, while there existed a doubt of entire success, is eager, among the crowd, to claim his relation to the enterprise: and the prophet, who sneeringly predicted its failure, is nowhere to be found. The world receives the promulgation of its actual accomplishment, with unqualified surprise. In a short time, we become familiar with its operation and effects; and, in comparison with other and more recent demands upon our wondering powers, we speedily forget the measure of our scruples, and the extent of our original astonishment. A proposition to apply the principles of aerostation, for the safe and speedy conveyance of men and merchandize from one place to another, in air balloons, would appear to the apprehensions of the greater portion of mankind the veriest evidence of insanity; and yet the first suggestion of the contemplated application of steam power to the purposes of navigation was received in a similar manner, and considered equally chimerical, by a large majority of the intelligent members of society. If a society should be organized, at the present time, for the entire abolition of wine from common use, upon the broad Mahometan principle, comprehending every description of vinous liquor, and indeed every liquor, which, in the uncourtly but emphatic phraseology of the Indian, will "*make drunk come*;" the society would undoubtedly commence its operations, not only with no prospect of immediate success, and against the sympathies of a numerous body in the community; but it would be the fortune of such an association to meet the direct opposition of the luxurious, the gay, the opulent, and

the fashionable. To many it would seem utterly impossible, if the principles of such a society should finally prevail, any longer to sustain the genteel and convivial relations of life. The *commune vinculum*, the common bond of social intercourse would be irreparably broken; the very charm would have departed; and "*the feast of reason and the flow of soul*" would no longer be found upon the earth. In short, the principal security of such a society, from the effects of a direct and vigorous warfare, would be found in the popular conviction of the utter absurdity and impracticability of its designs. And was not such the condition of public sentiment, in relation to all our temperance societies, whose efforts were primarily directed against the immoderate use of ardent spirits alone? The Massachusetts Society for the Suppression of Intemperance, as its very name imports, contemplated nothing more than a correction of the excessive use of spirituous liquors. The committee, instructed to prepare the constitution, in the year 1811, were directed to prepare a constitution for a society, whose object, in the very words of the resolve, was "*to check the progress of intemperance.*" The original constitution has not the slightest allusion to the grand and infallible specific, the only effectual corrective for this tremendous evil, the entire abolition of ardent spirits, in every variety of form. Addresses have been delivered before the Massachusetts Society for the Suppression of Intemperance, containing an explicit disavowal of all intention to effect an entire abolition of ardent spirits from common use, and avowing no higher design than the establishment of a system of temperate drinking. Officers of the institution, selected, not altogether on account of their particular and personal devotion to the cause, but occasionally to gather for the society the adscititious aid of a well known name and an elevated station, have gone to their graves, without any faith in those very promises, of whose ultimate and effectual fulfilment we have already such unequivocal demonstrations, in every portion of our extensive domain. Such were the highest aspirations of Dexter, and Dane, and Worcester, and Wadsworth, with whom, and their respected associates, the original thought of a combination for the achievement of this

invaluable good undoubtedly arose, in these New England States. Three years before, however, in the town of Monroe, in the State of New-York, a temperanbe society had been organized upon the simple principle of total abstinence. The first address, of which we have any knowledge, was delivered before the Temperance Society of Moreau and Northumberland, by the Rev. Lebbeus Armstrong, on the 25th day of July, 1808. In that society, although it adopted a principle of total abstinence, and enrolled its members under a corresponding pledge, there was a constitutional rule, indicative of the imperfect conceptions of its original founders. A breach of the obligation to abstinence was followed, not by the removal of the offender, as a matter of course, but by a pecuniary amercement, amounting to no more than twenty-five cents. These matters, trifling as they appear, are interesting points in the primitive history of our temperance reform. The sources of the mightiest rivers of the earth have been sought with indefatigable toil; and the traveller, Bruce, enjoyed not a more rational satisfaction, in contemplating the fountains of Abyssinia, than a zealous friend of temperance receives, when he discovers the humble original of that high and holy enterprise, in which he is engaged. Of those wise and good men, who gave the earliest impulse, in this noble undertaking, many have passed to their account, without even a distant view of their land of promise, from the heights of Pisgah. They could not have had any but the most imperfect contemplation of those glorious results, which are now developing, over the surface of the whole habitable earth. The fame of Galileo is not the less, because the telescope has been improved in every succeeding age, and a full survey of the present condition of public sentiment, on the subject of temperance, takes nothing from the reputation of those, who gave the direction and cleared the passage, for that gentle current, which has become the rush of mighty waters through the world, extending their refreshing influence to the farthest land.

It is now a matter of unfrequent occurrence, to witness a parade of the instrument of intoxication, in all its variety of forms, upon the sideboards of the wealthier portion of the com-

munity, at all hours of the day. Such, however, at the commencement of the earliest efforts in the cause of temperance, was the universal practice: an omission to press the poisonous draught upon the visiter was a palpable breach of the common rules of hospitality; and a reluctance to participate was an unequivocal evidence of incivility and ignorance of the world. It is but a short time, since the custom amounted to a general usage of introducing spirituous liquors into the dead man's apartment, preparatory to the commitment of his body to the grave. We are, some of us, not too young to remember, that even the holy man was scarcely prepared, on such occasions, to lift up his hands and his heart before God, until he had sufficiently partaken of the spirit. Can a more revolting spectacle be conceived, than the simple reality of a drunkard's funeral, as it was almost invariably conducted, some twenty years ago; and as it is still, occasionally, though rarely conducted, by such as are unwilling to abandon the usages of days by-gone? I refer not to the funeral obsequies of the palpable drunkard, the dramseller's victim, who perishes in the gutter, before the workshop of destruction; but to the very reputable drunkard, the citizen, whose worldly possessions were sufficient to ensure him, in the phraseology of the day, *a handsome funeral;* and to collect around his corpse a very creditable company of mourners, who mourned not as those without hope. His death was directly produced by some affection of the lungs, or the stomach, or the liver, or the brain; and his reputation was shielded under the mystical designation of the medical profession. He died undoubtedly of *cephalitis*, or *phthisis pulmonalis*, or *dyspepsia*, or *hepatitis*, which are frequently the causes of death in persons, whose habits have been perfectly correct. He was never drunk, in the serpentine sense of the word, in the whole course of his life. He may have been the chief depositary of the public confidence, in his own particular municipality; the careful and judicious manager of a town's affairs; wise in his generation to perfection. He may have been a man of godly conversation; he may have been a vender of drams through the week, and, having purified, to the very letter of the Levitical law, on Saturday night, he may have

taken his position as deacon of the parish, and ministered in the holiest of holy things, upon the Sabbath day. Nevertheless, he may have been a temperate and regular drunkard, a systematic and conscientious tippler; who ran down, with all the regularity of an eight-day clock; and abbreviated the span of life, by so steady and well regulated an application of the stimulating principle, that none, but a close observer, would have detected the truth, that he was a drunkard in grain. It has been the fortune of some of us to be present at the funeral solemnities of such a personage as this. We have seen ardent spirits ostentatiously displayed within a few feet of the receptacle of death, the coffin, which contained the tenantless clay. We have seen the friends, neighbors, and relatives of the defunct advance, one after another, to the table, and deliberately partake of the very poison, which caused the death of their departed friend: for, however the professor of the healing art may have designated the disease, of which he ultimately died; rum, ardent spirit, in some form or other, was the great, first cause of his dissolution. We should certainly express our abhorrence at the exhibition of the halter, or the poignard, or the preparation of laudanum or arsenic, at the funeral of a miserable being, who had committed suicide, by the instrumentality of either; and yet these circumstances, considered abstractedly from the influence of popular custom, are identical in every particular. Such was the condition of the public sentiment but a few years ago, that the omission to comply with this barbarous and disgusting usage, would have operated to the disadvantage of the parties concerned. It is a well known fact, that there were certain individuals, whose universal philanthropy conducted them to every funeral in the city or town, in which they happened to reside; and who might have been considered chief mourners, if their sympathy were to be measured, by the depth and sincerity of their potations. Among the wise and the good, there were distinguished civilians, eminent physicians, grave and learned clergymen, individuals of every profession, of irreproachable lives and conversations, who partook of ardent spirit, with a steady hand, and in a temperate measure; who concurred in the opinion of the celebrated

Brown, that life is a forced state; who therefore thought it expedient to stimulate a little; and who considered the whole temperance enterprise, limited as were its views, at the commencement, as absolutely wild and Quixotic, and about as likely to succeed, as an attempt to lay the four winds under a penalty bond, to blow in a temperate manner, over the land and the sea.

In such a condition of public sentiment, those great and good men, who were the pioneers, in this high and holy cause, proceeded, step by step, and in the most cautious manner. If they had proposed, at the very outset, the same high standard, which is proposed by the friends of temperance, at the present day; upon a world, so illy prepared for its reception, the whole project might have been improvidently lost; and ages might have rolled away, without any additional effort in its behalf. It is not conceivable, that the insufficiency, for the moral occasions of the world, of the already antiquated theory of temperate drinking, could have escaped the keen observation and the far-reaching intellectual vision of Dexter, the first President of the Massachusetts Society for the Suppression of Intemperance. It is less difficult to believe, that his genuine patriotism predominated over his own pride of thought and his personal ambition; and that he withheld a portion of his high conceptions, upon this interesting theme, from a justifiable apprehension, that their full disclosure, in the existing condition of popular opinion, might prove injurious and even ruinous to the cause. It is easy to imagine the effect, which would have been produced, by a vigorous attempt, in the beginning, to extend the application of the principle of total abstinence.

The great reformation, which has been so effectually begun, is not likely to stand still: it must either go forward, or recede. We occasionally are forewarned of a reaction. From what quarter will it come? Will the drunkards, in revenge, resolve to be drunker than before? Be it so: they will the sooner pass away from that fair heritage, which they have proved themselves unworthy to possess, and leave behind them a generation of temperate men. Will sober men turn drunkards, under the gratuitous patronage of the venders of drams? Will the im-

porter, and the distiller, the innholder, and the petty vender, combine, to replace this tottering Juggernaut upon its unsightly throne? Will they establish *Saturnalia*, throughout the cities of the earth, and scatter largesses of liquid fire to the world? Who are they, those good men, who keep watch and ward, and give us the first intimation of a reaction to come? Is it not inexpressibly amusing to hear this warning voice, lifted by men, who are directly interested in the continuance of the traffic in rum? Who may not lawfully smile, when he encounters this cautionary sentiment expanded over half a column of some advertising journal, and flanked, on the right hand and on the left, by numerous advertisements of whiskey and gin? The whole idea of a reaction is preposterous and absurd. It is impossible to indicate the point or the principle, upon which a reaction shall arise. The imposition of a public burthen, in the form of an oppressive tax, or in any other form, may lead to revolution and civil war; but, in the temperance reform, the very countersign is peace; its temples are not halls of the inquisition; its officers are not alguazils; its arguments are appeals to the common sense and the common feeling of mankind. Where there is no force employed, the idea of resistance is inconceivable. And we should like to know, who, even among the most devoted suitors, at the shrine of popularity, or among the most unprincipled teachers in the schools of irreligion and modern philosophy, will endeavor openly to embarrass the onward march of the friends of temperance, and persuade a world, cleansed and washed already of no small measure of its pollution, to return and wallow in the mire! We have said that this great moral reformation must either advance or recede. The latter is to be apprehended, on no principle whatever. Its unparalleled progress hitherto is an earnest of its future success. Amazing as are the results of its operations at the present day, it is more than probable, it is almost certain, that, upon the scale of actual achievement, we have advanced but a little way towards the consummation of all that is to be expected, as the end and aim of this magnificent enterprise. When our descendants, at some future day, shall take a retrospective glance at the efforts

of their ancestors, in this great and glorious cause, will it be fairly a matter for surprise, if they should not be impressed with a sentiment of profound respect for the consistency of their fathers? May they not exclaim, in the language of simplicity and truth, our worthy fathers undertook to abolish the use of ardent spirit; they organized themselves into societies; they signed pledges; they collected information with indefatigable industry, and circulated that information throughout the land; they published voluminous reports; they employed missionaries and agents; they celebrated anniversaries, and listened to their orators; they established presses for the more extensive diffusion of all knowledge connected with the object in view; they exhorted one another, and contributed money for this important end; yet they collected together, not only those, who may be presumed to have signed these pledges, without sufficient consideration of their import, but, in many instances, grave and experienced individuals, professing Christians, and men in high official station, and upon their boards of hospitality, they exhibited and partook of the juice of the grape, in its several varieties, wine, enforced and unenforced, which even the infidel is forbidden to taste, by the religion of the false prophet of Mecca. Not a glass of this liquor could have been thrown upon the fire without exhibiting an immediate proof, that it contained a very considerable portion of alcohol. We know, they will affirm, that men may be made drunk with wine, and for no other reason than because it is an ardent spirit. When we use the common expression, and say, that wine contains an ardent spirit, we must remember, that we can say nothing more of any spirituous liquor; for all have a proportion of pure water in their composition. Where, then, was the consistency of our ancestors? To this inquiry the answer is at hand. The wise and good of the present generation are aware, that the idols of the people are to be removed, one after another. The demolition of three hundred emblems of idolatry, in the Caaba, was, with Mahomet, the operation of an hour. The abolition of wine, over his wide dominions, from the Atlantic to the Ganges, was the immediate result of a mandate, pretended to have been received from God.

But here the appeal is neither to the fear nor to the credulity of man. Let us lay the foundation of this majestic work in the abolition of ardent spirit. Our descendants may raise the superstructure, as the future occasions of society may seem to require. He, who, at the present day, pledges himself to abstain from ardent spirit, in the common acceptation of the words, may conscientiously partake of other inebriating liquors of a milder class, so far as his pledge is concerned. How far he may proceed in any such indulgence, consistently with the preservation of his happiness and health, and the welfare of society, is matter for grave reflection. Examples are not wanting, of members of temperance societies, who occasionally stand upon their reserved rights, and are in danger of violating the prohibition of St. Paul.

Perhaps, in the regular advancement of public opinion, this interesting point may furnish a question for some succeeding age. It is not our intention to press it farther, at the present time. Of one thing, however, we are perfectly assured, that all the evils, which flow from the use of alcohol, under the technical designation of ardent spirits, as gin, brandy, whiskey and rum, are frequently produced by the use of wine and other inebriating liquors. Is it not an authorized presumption, is it not the fact, that there are individuals, who adhere most scrupulously to the letter of the pledge they have subscribed, and who would be essentially benefitted, if that pledge were more comprehensive in its character; who make up for the resignation of ardent spirit, commonly so called, by a more liberal allowance of the stimulants of a milder class; and of whom, in a peculiar sense, it may be affirmed, that the letter killeth, but the spirit maketh alive? Is there not a certain proportion of mankind, among the more opulent and fashionable classes of society, who have no disposition to co-operate with the friends of temperance, nor even to enrol their names upon the roster of any temperance society; who, nevertheless, have a sincere and becoming contempt for the vulgar drunkard; who turn away with disgust from those ungenteel allurements to intemperance, which are presented at every corner; whose nerves are unpleasantly affected, by the very effluvia, arising from alcohol, in its specific form; but who

are in the habit of daily stimulation with expensive wines, to an inordinate degree? The answers to these inquiries may be easily supplied. Let us turn aside from this portion of our subject, with a simple intimation, that the number is very considerable of those, who, under the pledge to abstain from ardent spirit, conceive themselves bound to abstain from wine; and there are societies, who remove all doubt upon the subject, by the direct phraseology of the pledge itself. The female temperance society, at the beautiful village of Sandy Hill, near the banks of the Hudson, in the State of New-York, are bound, by their constitutional pledge, to abstain "from wine, ale or strong beer, and all kinds of distilled liquor, unless they are prescribed as medicine, by a *temperate* physician." In connexion with this topic, it may not be amiss briefly to notice a very common observation, in the mouths of men, who persist in the use of spirituous liquors. Let the rich man relinquish his wine, say they, and we will give up our ardent spirit at the same time. Let us examine this entrenchment, and see if it be a strong hold or not. Wine is unquestionably productive of infinite mischief and misery; and, if it is hereafter to become a substitute, with a considerable proportion of those, who have resolved upon the abandonment of ardent spirits, it will be well worthy of the same vigorous and unrelenting crusade, which has been directed against their employment. But wine, at the present day, cannot be compared, in relation to its evil effects, with that fiery beverage, the drunkard's draught. But, to give the tippler the advantage in this argument, let us suppose, that wine is equally injurious with the most potent alcoholic liquors; and is not the proposition absurd in the extreme? If the abandonment of ardent spirit be the part of wisdom, if the determination to abstain, be in itself a good thing, why should the dram drinker hesitate, or make that abandonment depend upon any act or thing, to be done or omitted by another? If the abandonment of ardent spirit be not a good thing, the dram drinker cannot make it a better thing, by associating another with himself in its abandonment. The argument is precisely this: you have one grievous distemper; I have another. Our strength is daily di-

minished, and our lives are brought into jeopardy, by their continuance. The means of cure are perfectly simple, and entirely within the power of each of us; now I will agree, that if you will cure the disease upon your body, in which I have no interest, then, and not before, I will cure the disease upon mine. Such is the substance of this idle proposition; and there is not an argument, which has ever been cast in the way of this good cause, to impede its progress, which may not be disposed of in the same satisfactory manner.

We have cast a retrospective glance at the days of small things. When we turn our eyes upon the present condition of the world, and compare the colossal stature and gigantic strides of the temperance reform, with its first feeble life-cry, and all its impotent and inauspicious beginnings; let us neither fear nor falter, in any enterprise, directed to the improvement of the condition of man; however it may transcend our highest aspirations, or exceed the apparent measure of our finite powers.

In our own extensive domain, the progress of this mighty moral revolution so entirely exceeds the highest hopes and anticipations of man; it exhibits, in its stupendous monuments on every side, an achievement, so entirely beyond the measure of human power, that we are cheered onward to continued and augmented efforts, by the assurance of a present Deity, the arm of a directing and sustaining Providence. Town, County, State and National Associations are rapidly organizing, in every corner of our common country, from the Rocky mountains, to the Atlantic ocean. The world is daily acquiring new lessons of wisdom, upon this interesting subject; and it is becoming more thoroughly understood, in all its various relations. It is computed, that not less than two millions of the people of the United States abstain from using ardent spirits, and from furnishing them to others; more than five thousand merchants, and other venders of spirituous liquors, have abandoned their heart-sickening occupation,—the traffic in broken constitutions, and broken hearts; between five and six thousand drunkards have been reclaimed from a career of infamy; two thousand distilleries have been stopped; the number of societies in the United States, at the

present time, upon the principle of total abstinence, exceeds four thousand five hundred, the State of New York alone contains fifteen hundred and thirty eight; State temperance societies have been formed in every State in the Union, with the exception of two. Even the native Indian, to whose lip the poisoned chalice was first presented by a Christian, even the Indian of the forest, has put his hand to this holy work. There are temperance societies established among the Tuscarora, Seneca, Onondagua and Cayuga tribes. The temperance reform has been successfully introduced into the army and navy of the United States. It is no longer considered indispensable, that the sailor or the soldier should be reduced to the condition of a brute, that he may exhibit the spirit of a man; and that he should rush into battle, perhaps into the presence of his Maker, in a state of beastly intoxication. The highest commendation has been bestowed upon the condition of the Pacific and Mediterranean squadrons, since the date of this important change. In the merchant service, more than six hundred vessels are upon the stormy sea, whose gallant crews put their trust in God, and rely upon their natural energies, carrying no ardent spirit whatever. No sex, no age, no condition of society is indifferent to the result of this glorious enterprise. The field is the world, and every inhabitant of the earth has a vital interest in gathering the harvest. In the town of Bennington, a name which can never be forgotten, the daughters have set us an example, in this moral revolution of the world, fully equal to that exhibited by their worthy fathers, in our great political revolution of old; six hundred females have petitioned the board of excise to grant no license in that town, for the sale of ardent spirit. What an appeal is this! The mothers, the daughters, the sisters, petition the constituted authorities of a town, in behalf of their fathers, their husbands, and their brothers! Take not away from us, these petitioners may be supposed to say, take not away from us the happiness of our homes, the peace of our firesides; place not alluring snares, at the corners of our streets, to entangle the feet of those, whom we love; to mislead the steps of our fathers, and cover with shame those gray hairs,

which we are commanded to honor; to stupify the heads and corrupt the hearts, of those to whom we are united in the closest ties, for better, for worse; let not loose upon the world a cold, calculating, mercenary body of men, who, for the sake of a little lucre, shall tempt our husbands with the drunkard's draught, and win away our children's bread; annihilate our hopes of happiness on earth; give us ashes for beauty, and mourning for the oil of joy; and leave us, after a pilgrimage of complicated misery, the helpless and houseless children, and the heart-broken widows of unprofitable drunkards.

Let us contemplate the progress of temperance on other shores. If we had continued the dependant colonies of the mother country; if we had submitted to be taxed and tithed for her behoof; if our tributary millions and the bone and muscle of our whole population had gone to increase her wealth and her power, for two hundred years; the sum total of all the benefit she would have received, would have been as a drop to the ocean, compared with those incalculable advantages, which will infallibly result from the introduction of the temperance reform among the inhabitants of the British isles. This lesson of wisdom she has condescended to receive from her revolted children; and, with perfect magnanimity, the wise and the good have acknowledged the source from whence it is derived. The British and Foreign Temperance Society, under the patronage of the Bishop of London, sent their delegate to the great temperance convention, recently assembled in the city of Philadelphia. That noble devotion of time, talent and pecuniary aid, which, upon every call, in the cause of humanity and virtue, has distinguished the inhabitants of Great Britain, is abundantly manifested upon the present occasion. Societies are in progress in various quarters of the realm, acting upon the only rational principle, the principle of total abstinence; reports, journals, circulars and magazines are issuing from a thousand presses, and rapidly spreading information not only over the whole United Kingdom, but conveyed in her ten thousand barks, whose canvass is offered to every breeze, and whitens every sea; like the flying seed, they are committed to the winds, and scattered far

and wide, to vegetate in distant climes. England, Ireland and Scotland are eagerly engaged in this blessed work. The Swede receives with high satisfaction the tidings of a great moral specific for the evils of intemperance. The king of Prussia, by his consul general, in this country, has made application to the government of the New York State Temperance Society, for all information, which may aid him in the introduction of the reform into his dominions. In Maui, one of the Sandwich Islands, with a population of thirty-five thousand, the sale of ardent spirit has been forbidden by the government for fourteen years. Even in Southern Africa, there are two temperance societies, those of Grahamstown and Kat river, comprehending more than two thousand members.

The advocate in the cause of temperance may lawfully endeavor to enlist those kindlier affections, implanted in the nature of man. He may summon, in such a cause as this, the heart-broken father, and bid him open his wounds afresh for the benefit of others. He may compel the reluctant witness to uncover the tomb of his blasted hopes, and trace, step by step, the progress of intemperance in an only son, from the cradle of innocence to the grave of infamy. He may cause him to linger with a painful minuteness over the more touching incidents in the tale of sorrow; that little age of bitter anguish, the earliest moment of conviction, that his unhappy child, until then happy, innocent and confiding, was lost to a sense of shame, reeling in the public way. He may extort from the witness the admission, that the partner of his bosom, the mother of this incorrigible boy, subdued by this domestic misery, wept herself away, and died, at last, of a broken heart. He may even elicit the fact, that the victim of intemperance was prevented, by intoxication, from following the dead body of that very parent, whom he had hastened to the grave. He may summon another and another; the widowed mother from her sleepless pillow of tears, who has buried the pride of her heart in the drunkard's grave. He may exhibit before you the anxious and unhappy son of some degraded parent, secretly conducting home from the dram seller's door, the tottering steps of that wretched and ruined old man,

from whose loins he sprung; depositing the wreck perhaps of a once tender husband, an affectionate father, a worthy citizen, a professing Christian, upon his bed of shame, and exclaiming, in the language of humiliation, to the surrounding group of afflicted children, "this was our father; if we cannot honor, let us cover all that remains, with the mantle of filial affection and regret." The advocate in the cause of temperance may demand the testimony of the sister who pours forth, in vain, the eloquence of an agonized heart, to conquer that ruinous relish, which is hurrying the brother, the playmate of her childhood to an untimely grave, through the paths of corruption and of crime. He may call from her hiding place the poor pitiable wife, who had fled to some secret corner of the garret or the cellar, when the heavy and irregular tread and the profane and brutal salutation announced the return of a drunken husband; he may bid her recapitulate the history of her miserable union; its dawn, as bright and transient as the morning sun of an April day. This wretched man was virtuous then, industrious, temperate and happy. She gave him confidingly all that she possessed; her worldly goods and a devoted heart; he had squandered the one, and broken the other. The tongue, which had promised to love and to cherish, had proved indeed an evil member, dealing in nothing but unmeasured and unmerited abuse. That right hand, which she had received, in her bridal hour, in token of protection and fidelity, had forgotten its cunning, and fallen heavily, in the drunkard's wrath, upon a defenceless woman. She may lift up the curtain of concealment, and show you the interior of the drunkard's domicil, once the quiet fireside, the home, sweet home of a happy family, but now the scene of physical and moral desolation; the untimely grave of all domestic happiness; the den of complicated misery and crime, of loathsome disease and unnatural death. She may lead your eyes and your hearts, by the indication of her finger, to that ragged pallet of straw, which lies between the floor and the corrupted mass of tenantless clay. The very bedstead has been bartered for the abominable curse. The poison at length has finished the work. The miserable victim of intemperance has gone to his terrible account.

A group of half-clothed and starving children surround the unburied remains of the faithless husband and apostate father. They bend their eyes for support upon the abused and forsaken being, who is at last released from her bitter partnership of misery. Her early impressions of a religious faith have proved the lifeboat of her sinking spirit, upon the troubled waters, in a disastrous voyage. The pressure of accumulating sorrows has drawn her more closely to the Father of the broken in spirit. In her moments of deepest affliction, she has sought her consolation, not from the bottle, but from the book of God : and, when this certain refuge of the heavy laden, when the holy volume itself was at last pawned to the dram seller, by her worthless husband, for the drunkard's draught, she has conveyed its recollected counsels and its cheering promises to her crying and supperless children, teaching them to hope for the bread of a better life, from the God of the widow and the fatherless.

Such appeals, such arguments as these, are perfectly allowable in the cause of the temperance reform. We press them no farther than your reason will yield them its ready and substantial support. We ask you to reason rather than to feel. Resist, to the uttermost, if you will, the natural impulse of your hearts, and resolve to be guided by the clear and steady light of your understanding alone. Let us follow the example of the most ancient apostle in the cause of temperance, who neither declaimed, nor appealed to the passions of men ; Paul *reasoned* of righteousness, *temperance*, and judgment to come. That intemperance is an evil, all men agree. As to the measure of that evil, and the proper means for its suppression and prevention, there are different opinions: yet, as the whole subject becomes more thoroughly investigated, good, and wise, and disinterested men are rapidly and closely uniting in one common sentiment, that the evils of intemperance, direct and consequential, stand pre-eminently first and foremost, in the catalogue of human curses and calamities ; and that a cautious calculation of the cost and charge, and of all the petty sacrifice of habits to be involved in the adoption of an effectual corrective for this behemoth of evils, is altogether unbecoming in a Christian people,

professing to live in the love of country and the fear of God.

Four fifths of all the pauperism and crime, in the United States and Great Britain, and an enormous proportion of all mental and bodily diseases and premature deaths, are chargeable to the use of inebriating liquors. What is the proof of this assertion? The evidence is spread over the breadth and length of all temperance reports, journals, circulars and magazines, presenting the opinions, based on the strongest grounds, of eminent civilians and philanthropists of every profession, in Great Britain and America. It is therefore a reasonable conclusion, that a vast amount of domestic wretchedness must be the certain consequence of intemperance. The late Attorney General of the United States has explicitly given his opinion, that, if we could have a statistical survey of all the unhappy families in the United States, with the causes of their misery annexed, we should discover nine tenths, at least, to have been the result of intemperance. The venerable Chief Justice Marshall has recently expressed his opinion, in the following words: "The vice of intemperance is too extensively ruinous; the misery, which follows in its train, too certain and wide spreading; it has destroyed the peace and happiness of too many families, not to have engaged the serious and earnest attention of thinking individuals in every part of our country." It cannot be doubted, that inebriating liquor, which rouses all that is contentious in the nature of man, when extensively employed among a people, must lead to seditious and revolutionary movement, and jeopardize the stability of states and empires. The probability of such a consequence is always increased, in proportion as we advance towards those regions of the earth, whose inhabitants may be appropriately termed the children of the sun. "Generally speaking," says the Abbe Raynal, "intemperance makes men furious in hot countries, and only renders them stupid in cold ones. It hath therefore been necessary to forbid it with more strictness, in one climate than in another." It is by no means necessary, for the production of such a condition of mind, such a tone of popular feeling, as may eventually endanger the peace and safety of a state, that individuals should be addicted to the use of

ardent spirits, or fall into habits of gross inebriation. Gentle and continual stimulation with the choicest and most expensive inebriants is abundantly sufficient for the work. If the celebrated Dr. Cooper, of Carolina, who proposed to calculate the value of the Union, would faithfully analyze all those ingredients of evil, which have recently mingled and effervesced, in the great political cauldron of the South, we should be very much mistaken, if he did not discover a large proportion of old Monteiro wine, whiskey and peach brandy, at the bottom. The patriot therefore, not less than the philanthropist, is summoned, by his love of country, to assume his appropriate station, in the foremost rank, among the faithful friends of the temperance reform; and to press forward, firmly and fearlessly, for the accomplishment of this mighty moral revolution of the world; which shall emancipate man, not from chains and fetters, which detain the body alone in dishonorable bondage, but from chains and fetters, which bind him, body and soul, in the dust of the earth, under the unrelenting tyranny of his unnatural appetites and passions.

There is a higher and holier relation, in which the consideration of the effects of intemperance is pre-eminently important to man. This brutalizing vice, which renders him regardless of his fellow-creature and of himself, diminishes his fear of God, and weakens all his conceptions of a future state. Is there a more awful image, pictured in man's imagination, than that of an apoplectic drunkard, summoned, while the poisoned chalice is at his lips, hurried from his confounded associates directly into the presence of an offended God! Can it require the eloquence of inspiration, to teach the unprofitable drunkard, in a moment of sobriety, while he contemplates his wasted hours, his prostituted talents, his neglected duties, and the sum total of all the misery which he has brought upon himself, his family, his friends, to tremble at the idea of a judgment to come!

We have taken a summary view of the principal evils of intemperance. Its disgusting, its particular details are a matter of continual exhibition before the world. There rarely issues a public journal of any description from the press, which does not set before us some fresh example of its terrible effects. Its

ordinary consequences, pauperism, disease, degradation, insanity, crime of a less atrocious character, and lingering death, are so universally presented, in all the cities and villages of the United States, that they scarcely attract the attention of the busy world. We are occasionally roused from our habitual indifference, by the communication of an atrocious murder of a whole family, by some brutal husband, under the influence of ardent spirit. To-day we receive the afflicting news of a suicide, committed by a citizen, whose rash act cannot be explained, upon any principle; since he scrupulously abstained from ardent spirit; was perhaps a member of a temperance society; in easy circumstances; and never known to be drunk, in his whole life, upon any thing but wine. To-morrow we read the account of a human being, converted into a perfect fiend by enormous potations of cider or beer, who, in the moment of phrenzy,—I allude to a case of recent occurrence,—cuts down, with a single stroke of his axe, the wife of his bosom, and the child clinging at her breast. Three examples, of an aggravated character, have been exhibited, within a few weeks, in my own immediate neighborhood. A young man, unused to ardent spirit, driving his team from the city, drank freely of gin, at a grogshop, kept by a deacon. The poison soon found its way to the brain of this unfortunate young man. Within a few rods of my own door, he jumped down unnecessarily to hasten his cattle; and, attempting to regain his seat upon the tongue of his wagon, fell over, and the whole load, weighing nearly a ton and an half, passed over his body. He died on the second day after this event. This young man was no drunkard, and, by his thrift, had laid up several hundred dollars in our Savings' Bank. Being asked, by a fellow laborer just before he died, "do you know me?"—"I know you," he replied, "and you now see what comes of drinking spirit."——Another, a husband, and the father of five little children, fell into habits of intemperance. After a night of anxiety for her absent husband, the first object which met the eye of the miserable wife, when she opened her door in the morning, was the cold and lifeless body of the profligate, hanging upon a neighboring tree.——Two individuals, fathers, hus-

bands, friends and neighbors drank together, till they were drunk. They then disputed which had consumed the larger portion of a quart of rum—they quarrelled about their poison; and one gave the other numerous wounds with a knife, of which he died. When the contentious principle had been excited to a certain degree, all that was human became annihilated, and nothing but the brute remained. The consideration of friendship, the remembrance of their wives, the recollection of their children, the dread of earthly punishment, the fear of Almighty God, were all swept away, before the hurricane of a drunkard's wrath.—Such is the state of the account; earth has received its tribute of the flesh; the spirit of one miserable being has gone before the bar of God; the other awaits his trial here and hereafter;—there is a third, in whose ears may ring in the day of judgment, "wo be to him, by whom the offence hath come!" ——My friends, when I contemplate that abundant light of truth, which is brought to every man's door, in relation to the immorality of the traffic in ardent spirit; I say to you with the deepest solemnity, upon my honor as a man, and upon my conscience as a professing Christian, take away the sin and shame of intoxication from him who is no more, and I had rather be that dead man, than that living dram seller.

And is there no remedy for this tremendous aggregate of evil? Thank God, there is; a remedy, so exceedingly simple, that its very simplicity had concealed it from the observation of man, who never supposed, for an instant, that this gigantic monster could be brought to the ground, like the giant of Gath, with a smooth stone from the brook, and a shepherd's sling. The remedy of total abstinence is clearly sufficient for the work. Why then is it not immediately and universally applied? Ardent spirits, inebriating liquors are not only the fountains of all this incalculable misery, but they are altogether unnecessary for mankind. The natural beverage is at hand. Here, in the language of another, though in a different sense, "here is water, what wait we for?" We wait, my respected friends, for the distiller; he is not yet rich enough to be a substantial and a practical Christian. When he shall have lighted up the fires

of physical and moral desolation, for a few years more; and have amassed what he deems an adequate estate, by making and selling the instrument of intoxication and of ruin, he will give up the business entirely—perhaps to his eldest son! We wait for the importer, the poison-merchant, who has grown rich, by selling the waters of strife, and who cannot see the harm of the traffic, for the very dust of his chariot wheels. We wait for the grocer, the retailer, the taverner, the common victualler; they cannot help it; it is all in their line; they do not pretend to know more in such matters, than their betters the importer and the distiller: The law is on their side, and they mean it shall be. We wait, my respected friends, for the supple politician, the man, who may be safely intrusted to keep watch and ward, at the door of the temples of morality, whenever the hungry wolf shall be duly qualified to be the shepherd over the fold. A man, who, in relation to every movement, habitually interrogates himself, "is it popular," can do no possible service to the temperance cause; and, if, upon any occasion, he is brought to act apparently in its behalf, the friends of temperance may have reason to exclaim, in the language of the Spanish proverb, Heaven defend us from our friends, and we will take care of our enemies. Such an advocate will simply display before you, in glowing, and perhaps in eloquent language, the terrible evils of intemperance: he will scarcely advert to the very source of those evils; for the distiller, the importer, the grocer, the taverner, the retailer, with their relations, connexions and dependants, have suffrages to give or to withhold, and the day of election is at hand. His conduct, on such an occasion, will resemble that of an individual, who has the control of a vessel in imminent peril on the ocean, who contents himself with a graphic description of the surrounding scene and all its terrors, and advises the crew to be very careful for the future; but gives no direction whatever, which will have a tendency to extricate them from their present predicament.

No reflecting individual places any reliance whatever upon laws, unaccompanied by a wholesome and abiding temper in the people, demanding their enforcement. We can no more

legislate ourselves out of the evils of intemperance, than we can legislate ourselves out of the torments of the gout or the stone. It is now clearly perceived, that a perfect and final consummation of this glorious work can only be expected, through the triumph of public opinion. The curse of intemperance can effectually be removed in no other way, than by full, fair, and reiterated representations of its desolating effects, and of the high moral and religious obligations of mankind, to act in perfect concert, for the entire abolition of spirituous liquors in every form. The poisoned chalice must be resolutely dashed to the earth. The importer, if he has no respectful consideration for public opinion, must be instructed by a regard for his own interest, and the daily diminishing demand for the drunkard's draught, to turn away from his odious and dishonorable occupation. The distiller must be admonished, that an overwhelming majority of the wise and virtuous, in the present illuminated condition of the world, consider his employment, inconsistent with the dictates of common humanity, and diametrically opposite to the precepts of the Christian religion. The petty distributor of death and destruction by the glass, must be made to comprehend that his establishment is a moral nuisance; and that his responsibility to God and to man are well worth his grave and immediate attention.

Nothing has proved so effectual in this holy enterprise, as the consociation of mankind, the organization of temperance societies, upon the principle of total abstinence, and with a simple, intelligible, comprehensive pledge, as the common bond of these associations. It is too late in the day to trouble this assembly with arguments in favor of the principle of total abstinence. You all know that human ingenuity has never been sufficient for the work of graduating the quantity of intoxicating liquors to the various temperaments of men. You all know, that no plan can be devised, consistently with the free spirit of our institutions, which will prevent ardent spirits, if sold at all, from being sold to those, who will be injured by their use. You all know, that, for one individual who will employ them with any measure of discretion, an hundred will transcend all reason-

able bounds. The Massachusetts Society, which commenced, on the temperate drinking principle, has formally recognised the principle of total abstinence and the pledge. Having changed its nature, it has changed its name for a better, as you are well aware, without the aid of the Legislature; which does not appear inclined to works of supererogation, in the cause of the temperance reform. While four thousand five hundred societies exist in the United States alone, recognising this principle, and adopting the pledge, I am not acquainted with any association which rejects the principle, and acts without the pledge, calling itself a temperance society. When any man refuses to pledge himself, in such a cause as this, he should remember, in the consciousness of his own sufficiency, the example of St. Peter, and that pride comes before a fall. He should remember, that many will abstain, for the sake of their pledge, who would not abstain from a higher and a holier motive; and therefore, however unnecessary, as a restraint upon himself, as a philanthropist, it is his duty to sign the pledge, that his weaker brother may be induced, by his example, to employ a restraint, which is absolutely necessary for him. The oldest temperance society upon earth, the Society of Moreau and Northumberland, of which we have spoken, employs as a preamble to its constitution, the following extract from Dr. Paley's chapter on "drunkenness." "I own myself," says he, "a friend to the laying down of rules to ourselves of this sort, and rigidly abiding by them. They may be exclaimed against as stiff, but they are often salutary. Indefinite resolutions of abstemiousness are apt to yield to extraordinary occasions, and extraordinary occasions to occur perpetually. Whereas the stricter the rule is, the more tenacious we grow of it; and many a man will abstain rather than break his rule, who would not easily be brought to exercise the same mortification from higher motives. Not to mention that, when our rule is once known, we are provided with an answer to every importunity." Such is the excellent good sense of the celebrated archdeacon of Carlisle.

It is rather amusing to observe the inconsistency of certain individuals, whose scruples prevent them frem pledging them-

selves to any temperance society, but who, at their festive boards, are continually pledging one another. We are told by antiquarians, that, when the Danes first came into Britain, they were in the constant practice of assassinating the Britons, who were deep drinkers, at the moment when the victim's uplifted head and elevated arm, in the act of draining the goblet, presented the fairest opportunity for the deed; and that hence arose the universal habit of pledges of safety, in all their compotations, and that of drinking healths, at the present day. We may here perceive that drunkenness and murder have been associated together from the earliest times. But permit us to inquire, what are the arguments in opposition to the pledge? I am so very virtuous, says one man, that I have not the slightest occasion for any kind of support. He is of opinion that man is so very little lower than the angels, that between certain angels and certain men, himself for example, there is no very perceptible difference. To such a man we have two things to say: in the first place, we conjure him to sign the pledge, as we said before, for the sake of his weaker brother, who will be happy to refuse, if he be permitted to avail of the example of one so virtuous as he: in the second place, we remind him, that our blessed Redeemer, knowing that he should be betrayed by one of his disciples, and denied by another, and being assured, that the virtue even of inspired apostles, was the stronger for support, demanded a pledge of their everlasting fidelity and remembrance, when he established the eucharist. Another complains, that it is a trap for his conscience. A trap for his conscience! What Shibboleth is this! He will not take the obligation, because he fears he shall break it. How applicable to such a man are the memorable words of Matthew Henry; "Let us therefore," says he, "according to the character of a virtuous man, *fear* this oath, not *fear* to *take* it, for it is our duty, but fear to break it." Permit us to inquire of these individuals, who are so alarmed, at the idea of a trap for the conscience, if they have never ventured into such a trap, in the whole course of their lives? The politician, for example, who is so terrified at the slightest allusion to this terrible trap, for *his* conscience, when,

after all his shiftings and doublings, he is notified of his election, and is summoned to take the customary oath of office, does he exhibit the slightest reluctance to venture into this trap for his conscience, body and spirit? Another is averse to the pledge, because it takes away his moral power! Such an argument as this is entirely beyond our comprehension; we should as soon affirm, that we took away the physical power of a horse, by placing a bridle in his mouth, and a harness on his back. The moral power of man, we apprehend, is not in danger of being lost, by the imposition of moral restraints upon one's self. We seek the grace of God, that we may not be led into temptation: this is surely a very superfluous operation, for men, who have so high an estimate of their moral power. Another individual carries his mystifications still nearer to the moon; he cannot sign the pledge, because it takes away his individuality! And does not every social obligation do the same thing? What should we think of the man, who should refuse the customary pledge, at the altar of marriage, because it took away his moral power; because it was a trap for his conscience; because it deprived him of his individuality? No, he may exclaim, I am willing to be married to this lady, if it can be done, without a pledge; my high sense of my own virtue recoils at the bare idea of such humiliation as this; if she cannot rely upon my virtue, I am off. I cannot surrender my moral sense. I cannot give up my individuality, and all the attractions of the girl of my heart shall not prove a bait sufficiently alluring, to entice me into such a trap for my conscience. Nothing is more common than pledges in the ordinary intercourse of life. Every oath is a pledge. Every obligor in a bond, and every promisor and endorser in a note of hand, every soldier in the army, every sailor in the navy, and every individual who signs a shipping paper in the merchant service, and a multitude of mankind, in various relations, are falling, when the bait is agreeable, into these traps for their consciences. In a very great majority of cases, these objections to the temperance pledges are shallow and impotent excuses, and nothing more.

I have done. You have my thanks for your patient attention, and my best wishes for your prosperity and peace; that,

in the words of holy writ, "there may be no decay, no leading into captivity, and no complaining in your streets." If you are only almost persuaded, if you still halt between two opinions, I can offer you nothing but my unavailing regret. I trust, however, it is not so. I hope, I believe there are many in this assembly, who are as ready to pledge themselves to a firm and unrelenting resistance against the tyranny of their appetites and passions, as were their ancestors against that political tyranny, which roused the best energies of their natures, in days, which are said to have tried the souls of men.

Let us put our shoulders to the wheel. Let us put our hands to the work. Let us say, in answer to every importunity, and upon every occasion, we are pledged—pledged to ourselves, to one another, to the world, in the sight of angels and of men—pledged to abstain from the drunkard's draught. We will never, under its brutalizing influence, bring down the gray heirs of an old father to the grave. No miserable mother shall watch and weep over our bed of infamy. The drunkard's beverage shall never diminish our respect for the wives of our bosoms, nor lessen our devotion for the girls of our hearts. No anxious and unhappy children shall sustain our tottering footsteps from the dram seller's door. Our sleep of death may be on the field of battle or upon the pathless sea, but never in the drunkard's grave. Our children's bread shall no longer be given to the dogs. The dram seller shall no longer grow rich upon the sweat of our brows. We will no longer pay tribute of our hard earnings, that the importer may roll in his chariot, or that the distiller may add house to house and field to field. The call of duty shall not be the less readily obeyed, because we are temperate men, whether that call be the voice of humanity, or that solemn appeal, which summons the patriot to rally round the standard of a nation's liberty. When a mere speck on the distant horizon, portends the coming simoom, the sand storm of the desert, the wandering Arab cries Allah! and bows himself down to the earth, till its violence be past: but it will illy become the descendants of a brave and generous race to cower before the rising tempest, which may threaten the destinies of a

people, born to be happy, and determined to be one; whether the premonitory cloud arise in the East, or the West, or the North, or the South. Whenever, in sober earnest, the period of trial shall arrive; whenever infatuated men, in any section of our extensive domain, shall strive to sever the smallest strand of that sacred cord, which has drawn us and held us together, then, while among the hills and valleys of the revolution, the blood of ten thousand patriots who are laid to sleep with their glory, shall cry from the ground, then, my respected friends, and fellow-citizens, the stars and stripes, the banner of our Union, shall be upheld, not by an army of dram drinkers and dram sellers, but by the cool-headed wisdom and bodily power of COLD WATER MEN.